

whatever the case may be, because the super majority of Americans—the boss man, like they say in the country—they don't necessarily care about your personal problems, about the fact that you can't fill your tank up, about the fact that your child couldn't pay his or her student loans back and you had to stand in for your student loans. My mother always said in the old school—they used to call a guy in Tallahassee, Florida that owned Lewis State Bank, Mr. Speaker, they called him "Banker Lewis." And back in the old school, some of the grandparents and some of the folks that are probably in their 50s and 60s understand, they say co-sign now, they used to have to go down to the bank and credit union and stand for the person that's looking for the loan. Those days are over. And individuals that are looking to make money in a capitalist society, some care about their employees' personal problems, but some don't. And there's nothing wrong with capitalism, I think profits are a good thing, but I also believe that individuals that went to vote for representation here in this U.S. Congress deserve it. And this is what's happening here.

Look at the per barrel price, 2001. Remember that other chart that I talked about at Mr. CHENEY's meeting—who has a past history in oil, and I guarantee you will have a future in oil—it started off at \$25.88. And you can follow over here. And this is not fiction, this is fact. You start going up, up, up, and now we're at \$119.37 a barrel.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if I start saying that unleaded gas is \$3.70 or \$3.60, there will be many of your constituents and your constituents, Mr. MURPHY, and many constituents of Members of Congress here that will say the Congressman is incorrect. No, it's actually \$3.80 and \$3.90 in some places. And so I think it's important, when we start looking at what small businesses have to pay, what American people have to pay, you know, we have parents that are trying to carpool, get their kids to school. I mean, I live in the urban area. God forbid if I was in a rural area. What happens if I have to drive my soon-to-be 11-year-old son and my 13-year-old daughter 25, 30 miles to school under these circumstances?

And we have four pieces of legislation that this Democratic House has passed and waiting for our Republican colleagues, in many cases, to join us. And especially over in the Senate, Mr. Speaker and Members, where they have the 60-vote rule, you can't even bring things up. So you have oil executives going there saying, stand in the door of the Senate or stand in the door of the House and make sure that this doesn't pass or this amendment doesn't go on. It may be counterproductive to your constituents, but stand in that door. That's the kind of stuff we saw in the 108th Congress. That's the kind of stuff that I witnessed in the 109th Congress. But in the 110th Congress, it's a new day, and the people are looking for the

kind of representation that they voted for.

And I just want to share, and Mr. Speaker, this is not a threat or anything like that because I'm not in that business; I mean, I consider myself a nice guy and I get along with a number of the Members here. As a matter of fact, I don't know of a Member that I'm not on speaking terms with, Democrat or Republican. We all get along. We're colleagues. It's just like you go to work every day, you punch in. There are some people that work in some areas of the office or out on the construction field, but you all say hello to one another, I mean, why don't you? But the only time we separate is when Republican leadership may say, well, we can't be with that because a certain interest doesn't want us to be with that issue; or we have to show the difference between us and the Democrats, even if they're right. Well, back home, for those Americans that know what it means to sit at the dining room table and spread your bills out and figure out how you're going to pay them, those kind of individuals are looking for representation. Those kind of individuals are looking for relief. And they're not necessarily looking for relief for the people that they're paying the bills to, they're looking for the relief for them to help them figure out their dining room problem.

And so when we talk about rolling blackouts, when folks' lights go out, or whatever the case may be, I was in Haiti on Sunday evening and Monday, and I could sit and watch the different parts of Port-au-Prince, Haiti go into the dark because the country is running through economic problems. That happens in America. There are houses on every block in America—not every block, but some blocks in America that the lights are out, not because they went to bed early, it's that they can't afford the dog-gone bill.

And so when we sit here and start playing these games like our Republican leadership tried to do tonight with this whole motion to recommit, saying what are you all doing about gas prices, when turn around three-quarters of them didn't even vote for four of the bills that this Democratic House put forth to give the American people the relief that they called for, and then we're trying to do something about it, and then they try to hijack a good bill and trying to force the Members by saying, well, this Member voted—and we may see this this November, I don't know. Some Members, their motion to recommit, we voted it down, a very bad motion to recommit, ill-advised motion to recommit that some Member that voted for the last four bills to give the American people the relief that they deserve may find it in a political ad sometime soon in their district saying that they voted against some Republican motion to recommit that could not come to reality if it wanted to because it wasn't drafted right, it didn't fit into the bill. But

they had the right to be able to put the motion to recommit. So I think it's important that we break this argument down for the American people so that they understand what's going on here. That will not be rewarded.

Mr. Speaker, I stood here, as sure as my name is KENDRICK MEEK, Mr. RYAN and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and others, we stood here on this floor and we told the Members, listen, if you play with the American people, you're going to get stung and it's going to be bad and you're not going to recover from it. Some of you will not be here. Some of you will make career decisions. Check the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, I said it. And guess what? We took the majority. And guess what will happen this time around? Those individuals that know what it means when they sit down to the dining room table and try to figure out how they're going to make ends meet when they put their kids to bed, how are they going to meet the bottom line of their situation. And then we have individuals that are standing in here, that are standing in the policy door of this House and not allowing good legislation to pass to give the American people the relief or trying to stop good legislation from passing to give the American people relief.

□ 2300

They're not going to think if they're Democrat or Republican or Independent. They're going to vote for the people that are fighting for them, and that's us.

So I say to my Republican colleagues respectfully, those individuals that decide to follow leadership, that the track record's not good because I asked them to call some 25 or 30 Members that are now sitting at home reading the actions of Congress in the newspaper when it's dropped in front of their door in the morning. I don't want to be part of that group. I want to be here and have the distinct opportunity to be here in this U.S. House of Representatives that few in this country have had an opportunity to serve in. And I'm proud to be here, and I think every Member should be proud to be here. And I think that should be their first priority when they stand upright and they walk in here and they put this congressional pin on and they walk through the doors because the people expect it and deserve.

So, Mr. MURPHY, your bill today, like they say in some parts of the country, they had no other choice than to vote for it. But I'm glad that we had the leadership in place, Mr. Speaker, to allow that bill to come to the floor because I can tell you a great bill like that never would have seen the day, never would have under the lights, and never would there have been an opportunity for Members to take out their voting card and vote for it because it wouldn't have been allowed to come to the floor because that was something that we didn't do or they didn't do or